DUO FILII AND THE *HOMO ASSUMPTUS* IN THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA

THE GREEK FRAGMENTS OF THE *COMMENTARY ON JOHN*

The publication of Robert Devreesse's book, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*, in 1948 brought to light the best challenge to the traditional view of Theodore as the "Father of Nestorianism". This was an idea Devreesse had introduced with a series of articles in which he evaluated the reliability and value of the hostile fragments found in the condemnations of Theodore in the synod of the *Three Chapters*[1]. He contended that the evidently hostile intentions of those who introduced the quotations of Theodore's works in the Council of 553, including Leontius of Byzantium, by their intention of presenting as negative an image as possible, become useless in evaluating their author's Christological thinking. The reasons for this are that, first and foremost, they are taken out of context and, secondly, they are often falsified so as to support a heretical viewpoint.

M. Richard, in his "La Tradition des fragments du traité *Περὶ τῆς Ἐνανθρωπήσεως* de Théodore de Mopsueste"[2], also supported Devreesse's conclusion that the hostile fragments are of little value in reconstructing Theodore's theological system. Richard went further in showing that the Conciliar Fragments and those cited by Leontius and Vigilius, when compared with independent Syriac parallels, show clear signs of having been tampered with, preserving the hostile intentions of the opponents and not the original thought of their author.

Along with Richard and Devreesse, Paul Galtier in his "Théodore de Mopsueste: sa vraie pensée sur l'Incarnation"[3] and Rowan A. Greer, in *Theodore of Mopsuestia: Exegete and Theologian*[4], also supported Theodore's orthodoxy. Galtier denied that the Antiochene taught a doctrine of a merely "moral" union. He argued that Theodore taught a perfect coop-

1. R. DEVREESSE, *Les Fragments grecs du commentaire sur le quatrième évangile*, Appendix in *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste* (Studi e Testi, 141), Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948; *La Méthode exégétique de Théodore de Mopsueste*, in *RB* 55 (1946) 207-241; *Le florilège de Léonce de Byzance*, in *RSR* 10 (1939) 545-576; *Les chaînes sur Saint Jean*, in *Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément* 1 (1928) 1194-1205; and *Note sur les chaînes grecques de saint Jean*, in *RB* 36 (1927) 192-215.

2. M. RICHARD, *La Tradition des fragments du traité Περὶ τῆς Ἐνανθρωπήσεως de Théodore de Mopsueste*, in *Le Muséon* 56 (1943) 55-75.

3. P. GALTIER, *Théodore de Mopsueste: sa vraie pensée sur l'Incarnation*, in *RSR* 45 (1957) 161-186, 338-360.

4. R.A. GREER, *Theodore of Mopsuestia: Exegete and Theologian*, Westminster, Westminster Press, 1961.

eration, which is the result of, rather than the prerequisite for, the incarnation. Greer, on the other hand, drew attention to Theodore's strong ethical interests and his insistence upon the creatureliness of human beings, along with "the notion of man created imperfect and ready to be redeemed by *paideia* from imperfection to perfection"[5]. Greer, therefore, did not attempt to assimilate Theodore's Christology to that of Chalcedon, but strove to provide an understanding of humanity's essential freedom as a moral agent, as the basis for the *homo assumptus*, and thus, a "moral harmony" and grace[6]. This was also the theme that permeated Joanne McWilliam-Dewart's book, *The Theology of Grace of Theodore of Mopsuestia*[7].

This effort to reassert Theodore's orthodoxy, however, has also been met with great resistance. Stemming from Devreesse's book, Francis A. Sullivan and John L. McKenzie found themselves engaged in a dialogue from 1951-1959. The former tried to re-establish the authenticity and validity of the *Conciliar Fragments*, contending that both Devreesse and Richard depended too much on "the literal accuracy" of the Syriac translation as a source of comparison. Thus, Sullivan argued that it is at least legitimate, if not necessary, to consider the hostile florilegia when considering the theology of the Mopsuestian. He acknowledged the limitations introduced by their extraction from their original context, but he concluded that: "Their importance lies in the fact that they comprise a major portion of all that remains of Theodore's strictly dogmatic works"[8]. Sullivan's most strict critic was John L. McKenzie who, in turn, challenged his conclusions as being based on an approach "literary to an excessive degree"[9]. McKenzie further reinforced the argument against the value of the hostile fragments determining Theodore's theological system by providing even more evidence of falsification of the extracts by their compilers.

To these, the pivotal work of Richard A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ: A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*[10], should be added. Norris presents his case for a traditional view of Theodore's doctrine of *henosis* based on his anthropological model.

In his own discussion of Theodore's understanding of the one *prosopon* in Christ, Aloys Grillmeier notes that for the Mopsuestian this one *prosopon* is achieved by the Logos "giving himself to the human nature

5. *Ibid*., p. 22; also 16ff.

6. *Ibid*., pp. 57f.

7. J. McWilliam-Dewart, *Theology of Grace of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Studies in Christian Antiquity), Washington, DC, Catholic University of America Press, 1971.

8. F.A. Sullivan, *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, Rome, Pont. Univ. Greg., 1956, p. 158.

9. J.L. McKenzie, *The Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on John 1:46-51*, in *TS* 10 (1953) 73-84.

10. R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ: A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, London, Oxford University Press, 1963.

which he unites to himself"[11]. This is not, argues Grillmeier, a *unio in hypostasi et secundum hypostasim*, in the Chalcedonian sense, but in reaction to Arianism and Apollinarianism which "*de facto* predicate of Christ a *unio in natura et secundum naturam*"[12].

It has thus been argued that it is exactly in this context of the union of the one *prosopon* in Christ that Theodore's Christology has been one of "grace" and "freedom", limited, though as it may be by the fact that the conceptual distinctions between *physis* and *hypostasis*, nature and person were not articulated clearly – if they were even possible – before Chalcedon[13].

To further examine this, as well as Grillmeier's assertion, that Theodore's Christology: "while stressing the two natures firmly, is open for an indication of the true unity in Christ"[14], I turned to one of the Interpreter's primarily Christological works that for decades has been at the periphery of the discussion, namely, his *Commentary on the Gospel of John the Apostle*.

Of Theodore's two most important Christological works, the *De Incarnatione* and the *Commentarius in Evangelium Ioannis Apostoli*, only the latter still exists in an almost complete Syriac manuscript originally discovered in 1868 by G.E. Khayyatt[15] and translated into Latin in 1940 by J.-M. Vosté[16].

Assisted by the Syriac version, Robert Devreesse evaluated critically between 1927 and 1948 the Greek editions of Theodore's *Commentary on John*. Devreesse's examination revealed that of the *ca*. 1500 lines in Migne's edition, approximately 400 lines (or 45 fragments) were falsely attributed to the Mopsuestian, and should, therefore, be eliminated[17]. His investigation also resulted in the identification of 78 additional fragments that, until then, had been falsely attributed to various other authors, in-

11. A. GRILLMEIER, *Christ in the Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, transl. J. Bowden, Vol. 1, Atlanta, GA, John Knox Press, 1975, p. 434.

12. *Ibid*., 436.

13. For recent studies on Antiochene, as well as Theodorian exegesis see F. YOUNG, *The Rhetorical Schools and their Influence on Patristic Exegesis*, in R. WILLIAMS (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge, University Press, 1989; EAD., *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, Cambridge, University Press, 1997; B. NASSIF, *Spiritual Exegesis in the School of Antioch*, in ID. (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Theology: Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1996; J. O'KEEFE, *'A Letter that Killeth': Toward a Reassessment of Antiochene Exegesis*, or *Diodore, Theodore, and Theodoret on the Psalms*, in *JECS* 8:1 (2000) 83-104; R.C. HILL, *Theodore of Mopsuestia, Interpreter of the Prophets*, in *Sacris Erudiri* 40 (2001) 107-129.

14. GRILLMEIER, *Christ* (n. 11), Vol. 1, p. 434.

15. J.-M. VOSTÉ, *Le Commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur S. Jean, d'après la version syriaque*, in *RB* 32 (1923) 524.

16. J.-M. VOSTÉ, *Theodori Mopsuesteni Commentarius in Evangelium Johannis Apostoli* (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium: Scriptores Syri, Series IV, 3), Paris, E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1940.

17. DEVREESSE, *Note* (n. 1), p. 209.

cluding John Chrysostom, Origen, and Cyril[18]. With the addition of the new fragments, Devreesse produced the first critical edition of Theodore's *Commentary on John*, consisting of 140 fragments in 114 densely printed pages, replacing Migne's edition of almost a century earlier[19].

During the decades following Devreesse's edition, however, even the works that gave most serious consideration to the *Commentary on John*, including Maurice F. Wiles's *The Spiritual Gospel*[20], and Aloys Grillmeier's *Christ in the Christian Tradition*[21], focused primarily on the Syriac translation, ignoring almost totally the Greek critical edition and making only passing references to it. In my dissertation I was able to show many of the differences between the two versions, and begin the process of bringing due attention to Devreesse's pivotal work[22]. One of the issues that emerged out of that study was the Christological differences present in the two versions. In this study I have attempted to show that the Christological thought that emerges from the Greek fragments is indeed one that stands against Arianism and Apollinarianism, but more importantly, it is also one that stands firmly on the grounds of Nicea and Constantinople.

I. Leontius of Byzantium, the Constitutum Vigilii and the Christology Presented in the Conciliar Fragments of the Fifth Ecumenical Council

Theodore died *in ecclesiae pace,* in 428, after a tenure of 36 years as a bishop. A few years later, Theodoret still testified that he was "a doctor of the whole church and successful combatant against every heretical phalanx"[23]. His "peace", however, did not last long. Soon after his death,

18. Some of these fragments were reproduced in Devreesse, *Les chaînes grecques* (n. 1), pp. 212-215. Devreesse identified additional fragments in the critical edition of Theodore's Commentary on the Gospel of John, found in the Appendix of his 1948 *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*. These fragments had been published under the name of Origen (six fragments), John Chrysostom (seven fragments), Cyril of Alexandria (eight fragments), Apollinarius (twelve fragments), Ammonius, the fifth-century bishop of Alexandria (six fragments), and Theodore of Heraclea (twenty-five fragments). In addition, a small number of fragments (four fragments) survived under the cover of anonymity.

19. For a comprehensive discussion of the differences between the Greek and Syriac versions of the Commentary, see Devreesse, *Les chaînes sur Saint Jean* (n. 1), pp. 209-212; *Essai* (n. 1), pp. 293-303. Migne's edition of the *Commentary on John* is found in *PG* 66, 727-786.

20. M.F. Wiles, *The Spiritual Gospel: The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church*, Cambridge, University Press, 1960.

21. Grillmeier, *Christ* (n. 11), Vol. 1, pp. 421-439.

22. G. Kalantzis, *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia as Expressed in the Greek Fragments of his* Commentarius in Evangelium Ioannis Apostoli, Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1997, pp. 60-92. John McKenzie has provided a very detailed comparison between the two versions in his 1953 article quoted *supra*, n. 9.

23. Theodoret, *Histor. Eccl.* 5.40.1; cf. L. Parmentier, *Theodoret Kirchengeschichte*, in G.C. Hansen (ed.), *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1998.

the Mopsuestian became a center of attention and attack by the Alexandrians in general and Cyril in particular – especially in his treatise *Contra Diodorum et Theodorum*[24].

More than a century after his death, the bishop of Mopsuestia was formerly condemned by the Fifth Ecumenical Council in May 553.

Since the late 430's, the understanding and interpretation of Theodore's Christology was greatly influenced by Cyril's *Contra Diodorum et Theodorum* (only fragments of which survive) and the conclusions drawn therein. Even the Acts of the Fifth Session of the Second Council of Constantinople preserve a series of ten extracts from Theodore's works, each with its refutation by the Patriarch of Alexandria, as was found in his treatise.

However, as Sullivan has shown, half of the extracts, found in his *First Book against Theodore*, were erroneously attributed to him, for they are excerpted from Diodore's works[25]. Cyril's, however, was not the only collection of fragments on which the condemnation of 553 was based. Two other very important sources were Book III of Leontius of Byzantium's work *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* and the *Constitutum Vigilii*.

Leontius extracted thirty-six fragments from Theodore's works, including twenty-nine from the *De Incarnatione*, six from the *Contra Apollinarem* and one from the *Commentary on John*. Twenty-nine of the fifty-five *capitula* found in the *Constitutum* are also found in the works of Cyril and Leontius. Of the remaining twenty-six, four are from the *De Incarnatione*, nine are from the *Contra Apollinarem,* while thirteen are from various other exegetical works of Theodore. The *Acta Concilii* duplicate the extracts of Cyril and Leontius of Byzantium without any new additions[26].

The Christology reported in all three of these works does not differ from that initially presented by Cyril in his *Contra Theodorum*. They

24. The events of the years between Theodore's death and his condemnation in 553 have been closely chronicled by both Devreesse in his *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste* (especially ch. 4-10) and M. RICHARD in his *Acace de Mélitène, Proclus de Constantinople et la Grande Arménie*, in *Mémorial Louis Petit*, *Mélanges d'histoire et d'archéologie byzantines*, Bucarest, 1948, pp. 393-412. The two authors give a detailed analysis of these 125 years, especially of the relationship between Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria and Theodore, the representative of Antiochene theology and exegesis, and – most importantly – the teacher of Nestorius of Constantinople. Devreesse shows clearly that Cyril's antipathy for the Bishop of Mopsuestia stemmed from his attitude towards his contemporary rival in Constantinople (DEVREESSE, *Essai*, pp. 153-161). The theological differences between Cyril and the Antiochenes are presented by N. RUSSELL, *Cyril of Alexandria*, in C. HARRISON (ed.), *The Early Christian Fathers*, London – New York, Routledge, pp. 31-58. For Cyril's theological terminology see M.-O. BOULNOIS, *Le paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie: Herméneutique, analyses philosophiques et argumentation théologique* (Collection des études augustiniennes. Série Antiquité, 143), Paris, Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1994.

25. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), p. 37 n. 9, notes that most of the fragments are from Diodore's *Contra Synusiastas* (*PG* 86, 1388A-C).

26. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), pp. 40-43.

rather reiterated the accusations of separation of the Incarnate Logos into "Two Sons", the lack of *communicatio idiomatum* and, as is also the case with the XII[th] anathema, accused Theodore of supporting Christ's mutability.

Marcel Richard concluded, therefore, that all these fragments originate from a common *florilegium*[27]. Sullivan noted that "there is a striking correspondence between the texts of Leontius and the passages of Theodore quoted by Cyril of Alexandria in his 'Second Book Against Theodore'"[28]. What is even more telling, though, is that, as both Richard and Sullivan have proven conclusively, contrary to Cyril's claim that he "studied the books of Theodore and Diodore, picked out some of the chapters, and refuted them"[29], he drew exclusively from this common *florilegium* for his presentation and refutation of Theodore's Christology.

Cyril, therefore, based his interpretation of Theodore's Christology on a very limited number of extracts from the works of the bishop of Mopsuestia[30]. The Acts of the Fifth Council quote the seven fragments which Cyril chose to refute in his *Second Book Against Theodore*: four of these extracts are from the *De Incarnatione*, one from the *Commentary on Hebrews* and two from the *Catechetical Homilies*. Due to his lack of first-hand familiarity with Theodore's work, Cyril inadvertently confused five extracts from the writings of Diodore for Theodore's own work[31], and thus forced much of the Christological thought of the former into that of the latter; a point seized by Facundus of Hermiane in his defense of Theodore in the *Pro defensione trium capitulorum*[32] as well as by Theodoret of Cyrus, in his *Apologia pro Diodoro et Theodoro*[33].

Devreesse, McKenzie, and Richard contest the value of the hostile *florilegium* as a source that honestly represents the Christology of Theo-

27. RICHARD, *La Tradition* (n. 2).

28. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), p. 46.

29. Cyril, *Epist*. 69, in *PG* 77, 340C.

30. The case of the treatment of Theodore's *De Incarnatione* is representative of the limitations of these fragments. We know that Theodore's treatise was a work of considerable length; it consisted of fifteen books, divided into ninety sections, extending to more than fifteen thousand verses (SULLIVAN, *Christology* [n.8], p. 44). Of this massive work, there were only thirty-eight to forty extracts that were chosen to be included in the *florilegium* and they are quoted in various combinations by Theodore's opponents. If the fact that they are taken out of context and many are distorted to present a heretical view is also taken under consideration, one may easily come to the conclusion that though they may be important, they are by no means representative of Theodore's work or argument. This also holds true for the rest of the fragments presented in the hostile sources.

31. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), pp. 39-40.

32. Facundus of Hermiane, *Pro defensione trium capitulorum*, in *PL* 67, 527ff.

33. Theodoret's treatise *Pro Diodoro et Theodoro* is now lost. However, J.D. MANSI (ed.), *Sacrorum conciliorum collectio*, IX, Graz, Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1960, pp. 252-254, conserves some of the fragments that were found in the Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council. See also, L. VON ABRAMOWSKI, *Reste von Theodorets Apologie für Diodor und Theodor bei Facundus*, in *Studia Patristica*, I (Texte und Untersuchungen, 63), Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1957, pp. 61-69 and her *Der Streit um Diodor und Theodor zwischen den beiden ephesinischen Konzilien*, in *ZKG* 67 (1955/56) 252-287.

dore and accuse its compilers of dishonesty and intentional distortion of the author's theology in order to achieve their purpose of condemnation[34]. Although Sullivan defended the legitimacy of the hostile fragments as faithful quotations from the works of Theodore, he also had to come to the conclusion that not only "there can be little doubt about the dishonest intentions of the compilers" in a number of cases, but that often the compilers themselves "depended on secondary, and unreliable source[s]". Thus, he concluded that "the cutting of the context has definitely given rise to an unjust condemnation"[35].

Based on these hostile fragments, the XII[th] anathema of the Fifth Ecumenical Council makes it evident that Theodore's condemnation was founded on the assumption that his Christology (1) exhibited the Nestorian concept of *duo filii*, (2) was lacking a *communicatio idiomatum*, and (3) was promoting the *mutability* of the Incarnate Logos[36].

All three accusations echo clearly Cyril's own assessment of a century earlier. As Sullivan noted, "there can be no doubt that Cyril's verdict on Theodore has been of prime importance in determining the traditional view of the latter's orthodoxy"[37].

Both in Cyril's letter to Acacius of Melitene[38], and in his *Contra Diodorum et Theodorum*[39], we see that the bishop of Alexandria did not find any distinction between the writings of Theodore and Nestorius' division of Christ into two persons, a reduction of the Athanasian concept of the Incarnation to nothing more than a "mere indwelling" of God in a human, κατὰ χάριν καὶ εὐδοκίαν[40]. This accusation is more clearly expressed in *Epist*. 73.2, a letter of Rabboula of Edessa to the Patriarch of Alexandria:

34. DEVREESSE, *Essai* (n. 1), chapt. 9; also *Le florilège de Léonce de Byzance* (n. 1). J.L. MCKENZIE, *Annotations on the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, in *TS* 19 (1958) 345-355; ID., *The Commentary* (n. 9); ID., *A New Study of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, in *TS* 10 (1949) 394-408. RICHARD, *La tradition* (n. 2).

35. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), pp. 111-112. In order to put Sullivan's conclusions in their proper milieu one also has to consider the lengthy reply his *Christology* elicited from J. McKenzie in his *Annotations on the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (n. 34) where he challenged many of the conclusions of Sullivan, including the reliability of the hostile *florilegia*.

36. The text and translation of the XIIth anathema is found in M.V. ANASTOS, *The Immutability of Christ and Justinian's Condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 6 (1951) 127-128. The translation of Cyril's twelve anathema's is found in RUSSELL, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), pp. 176-189. Russell notes (p. 176) that "it is not until the Fifth Ecumenical Council of 553, when Theodore of Mopsuestia's writings were condemned, that the Twelve Chapters received authoritative status". For the differences between the Syriac text and Leontius' Greek fragments see MCKENZIE, *Annotations* (n. 34), pp. 347-355.

37. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), p. 6.

38. Cyril, *Ad Acacium*, *Epist*. 69.2, Unless otherwise noted, the English translations are from J.I. MCENERNEY, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 1-50 and 51-110* (The Fathers of the Church, 76-77), Washington, DC, The Catholic University of America Press, 1985.

39. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), p. 7.

40. *PG* 76, 1443C. Also *PG* 76, 1445B-C.

> This too follows which pertains to the humanity [of Christ]. They do not maintain that humanity was joined to the Word of God according to substance or subsistence, but by some good will, as if the divine nature could not receive another mode of union because of illimitableness[41].

Cyril could see no alternative than to anathematize any such division or separation of substances[42]. He would point out that: "I know that the nature of God is *impassible*, *immutable*, and *incorruptible*, even though by the nature of his humanity Christ is one in both natures and from both natures"[43].

It is on these two additional points that Cyril's understanding of Theodore's Christology would force him to further oppose the Mopsuestian: on the questions of *communicatio idiomatum* and of Christ's *immutabilitas*.

The Patriarch of Alexandria could not discern a *communicatio idiomatum* in the Christology of either Diodore or Theodore. His interpretation of the two Christologies in unison – and in association with that of Nestorius – led Cyril to combine Diodore's explicit denial of the predication of human attributes to the *Deus Verbum*[44] with Theodore's use of the *homo assumptus;* a combination that struck fear in the heart of Cyril.

For the bishop of Alexandria, this could mean nothing other than the Nestorian division of substances, a rejection of the concept of the communication of idioms whereby the actions and passions of the human element could and would be predicated of the Divine Logos[45]. This would be an Incarnation in which the *Filius Unigenitus* would not be the subject of suffering and death, the *Deus Verbum* would not be the one subjected to the Father, nor "the one born of the Jews", all of which would exclusively be attributed to the *homo assumptus*. This is not an Incarnation at all, it is an "inhabitation", an "indwelling" *bona voluntate*, κατ᾽ εὐδοκίαν; an idea that diminishes the ἐνανθρώπησιν of the one and only Son of God into a process of adoption of another, the *homo assumptus*, and thus, results in the eventual separation of the *Deus Verbum* into two

41. Cyril, *Rabbulae Episcopi Edesseni ad Cyrillum*, *Epist*.73.2.

42. Theologically, the heart of Cyril's objection to Antiochene Christology and the focus of his vehement struggle against Theodore was what he perceived to be a division of substances and persons identical to that found in the teaching of Nestorius; a Christology he saw as being in total opposition to his own. For, Cyril believed that: "Our one Lord Jesus Christ was, to be sure, the Only-begotten Son of God, His Word made human and incarnated, not to be divided into two sons, but that he was ineffably begotten from God before all time and in recent periods of time, he was born according to the flesh from a woman, so that this person is one also. In this way we know that … he is God and man at the same time, that he who without change and without confusion is the only begotten, is incarnate and made man, and moreover that he was able to suffer according to the nature of his humanity" (Cyril, *Ad Theodosius Aristolaum Tribunum et Notarium*, *Epist*. 59.2).

43. Cyril, *Ad Sanctum Xystum Papam*, *Epist*. 53.2.

44. Cyril, *Frag*. *3*, in *PG* 76, 1438D-1439A and *Frag*. *5*, in *PG* 76, 1440B.

45. Cyril, *C*. *Nestorius* II, 3-10, in RUSSELL, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), pp. 149-151. Also SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), p. 286.

centers of consciousness, action, and will, in the person of Jesus Christ. This sentiment had been condemned at Ephesus under the name of Nestorianism.

The collection and critical edition by Robert Devreesse of the Greek fragments of Theodore's *Commentary on John* provide us with a new possibility to study his Christology based on a work that is primarily Christological.

II. On the Question of Duo Filii

The principal accusation brought against Theodore in the XII[th] anathema of 553 was that his Christology exhibited two distinct centers of consciousness of the Incarnate Logos. This clearly echoed Cyril's own third and fourth anathemas found in the Twelve Chapters[46]. In the third anathema Cyril declared that "if anyone with regard to the one Christ divides the hypostases after the union, connecting them only by a conjunction in terms of rank or supreme authority, and not rather by a combination in terms of natural union, let him be anathema"[47]. The fourth of Cyril's anathemas also reads: "if anyone takes the terms used in the Gospel and apostolic writings, whether referred to Christ by the saints, or applied to himself by himself, and allocates them to two *prosopa* or *hypostases*, attributing some to a man conceived of as separate from the Word of God and some, as more appropriate to God, only to the Word of God the Father, let him be anathema"[48]. The "Divine Logos" is seen as one *prosopon* with its own *physis* and *hypostasis*, and the "Christ" as another, autonomous and distinct *prosopon* with its own *physis* and *hypostasis*. The second part of the accusation refers to the mode of the union of the two. According to this, the two, the Divine Logos and Christ, come intimately close to one another, but never become one. Because he wrote before Chalcedon, Theodore, to be sure, did not define clearly his understanding of the term *hypostasis*, since such conceptual distinctions as those between *physis* and *hypostasis*, nature and person, had not yet been clarified[49].

Theodore's anthropological model, as Norris showed us[50], allowed for the *psyche* and the *soma* to each have its own *physis* and *hypostasis*. The two, however, when united, are one coherent whole forming ἓν πρόσωπον καὶ μίαν ὑπόστασιν[51].

46. Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), pp. 180-182.
47. *Ibid*., p. 180.
48. *Ibid*., p. 181.
49. Grillmeier, *Christ* (n. 11), Vol. 1, pp. 432-437. For a treatment of the problems in terminology and the fluidity of the interrelationships between *ousia*, *physis*, *hypostasis*, and *prosopon* in Cyril – and by extension the pre-Chalcedonian debates – see Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), pp. 39-46.
50. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (n. 10).
51. McKenzie, *Annotations* (n. 34), pp. 349-350.

The limitations of this model become apparent when it is adopted to describe the Incarnation. Sullivan points out that this model would imply that the single *prosopon* was created in the Incarnation itself and is therefore distinct from the person of the pre-existent Word. He proposes that Theodore did not understand that the *prosopon* in which the two natures are united "is actually the Divine Person of the Word"[52].

In the *Commentary on John,* the issue of the Incarnation of the Divine Logos was not presented in a systematic way, but primarily in response to Arianism and Apollinarianism. As a result, the emphasis of the author was on safeguarding the theological *sine qua non* that had emerged from the two ecumenical councils of his time. The first was the *homoousian* relationship between the Father God and the Incarnate Only-begotten Son, while the second, even more relevant and recent to Theodore's immediate period, was the insistence on a human soul of Christ.

There are 41 passages throughout the *Commentary* in which Theodore dealt with the subject of Christ's nature. He introduced the term *homoousios* at least three times in his *Commentary*, in accordance with Nicene-Constantinopolitan formulations. In fragments 76 and 132 (twice), he comments on John 10,14-15, 16,26-27[a] and 17,3, respectively:

> *Fragm.* 76, X.14-15: Then he said: "Just as the Father knows me I, also, know the Father," instead of [saying] "I know the identity of the nature and of the substance of the Father, being *homoousios* to Him, and he also knows me"[53].
> *Fragm.* 132, XVI.26-27[a]: Knowing that the Son is *homoousios* to the Father, they would, therefore, be asking these things from the Son as if they were asking the Father[54].
> *Fragm.* 132, XVII.3: This doctrine expels the lie of the polytheistic error, admitting only one God, while it overleaps the perception of the Jewish thoughtlessness – inasmuch as the Jews worship only the Father, surely not seeing that from the Father, by means of an unspoken word, His Son was born; while it teaches Christians to worship both the God begotten from the Father and the Spirit which is provided from the Father through the Son and is in the same composition *homoousion* with the Father and the Son, wherefore there is perfect life and [is] the cause of eternal life[55].

In all three fragments, the Son is clearly identified as being *homoousios* with the Father, while in the last excerpt the Holy Spirit is also shown to be *homoousion* with both the Father and the Son.

The Christology found within these fragments, though, is not limited to a repetition of the *homoousian* formula. It has embedded in it two additional elements that merit further examination. The first is the identifica-

52. SULLIVAN, *Christology* (n. 8), p. 284.
53. DEVREESSE, *Essai* (n. 1), 352.24.
54. *Ibid.*, 402.6[b]-7[b].
55. *Ibid.*, 404.12-18.

tion of the generation of the Son as "God begotten from the Father". In his commentary on John 1:1-2, the Bishop of Mopsuestia went to great lengths to argue that though the Son is said to be "born", that does not indicate a beginning of existence, for he is eternal and not "as the crazy Arians say that he received his existence at a later time"[56]. Theodore recognized that the relationship between God and Logos is also a relationship between Father and Son. Drawing his arguments from the Nicene definitions, the Mopsuestian argued very specifically against the Arians that "it was never when he was not, because he always was"[57]. Theodore argued that John's statement, "the Word was with God", clarifies the relationship, "showing clearly that he said the Word to be at the beginning not as uncaused, but as eternally coexisting with the One who is the cause"[58].

In the excerpts from the *Commentary on John* where the focus was on the Son's *homoousian* and eternal relationship to the Father, Theodore refuted, both implicitly and explicitly, the main arguments of adoptionist Christologies.

The only fragment that may be seen as supporting both the ancient and modern critics of Theodore is *Fragm.* 27, V.19-20. There, the author describes the process of the Incarnation in these words:

> Inasmuch as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was God and man – and although he was present with God in every way by nature, he later conjoined (συνάφεια) himself to the man in all through the union with him…[59].

This is one of the two times that the idea of *assumption* is found in the Greek fragments[60]. A first look at this passage would tend to support the reading of *Duo Filii*, one being the preexisting Logos, while the other being the man to whom "he later conjoined himself".

To this one can also add the prolixity of Theodore's language, as well as his propensity for terminological fluidity. McKenzie and Russell attribute this to the flexibility that characterizes terms such as *physis*, *hypostasis, prosopon,* and *ousia* before Chalcedon[61].

Cyril of Alexandria in his *Adversus Nestorius* will accuse the Antiochenes of a lack of definition and a fluidity of language that inevitably leads to heresy. He argued: "how is it not beyond dispute by anyone that the Only-begotten, being God by nature, became man, not simply by a conjunction, as he himself says, that is conceived as external or inciden-

56. *Ibid*., 308.22-23.
57. *Ibid*., 308.26.
58. *Ibid*., 311.15-16.
59. *Ibid.* 326.10-12.
60. The other is *Frag*. 78, X.18.
61. McKenzie, *Annotations* (n. 34), pp. 348-349. Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), pp. 40-41 also shows the same flexibility in Cyril's own use of the terms which he does not seem to address before the Nestorian controversy.

tal, but by a true union that is ineffable and transcends understanding?"[62]. A conjunction merely of proximity and juxtaposition[63].

This passage, however, written some twenty years before Cyril's differentiation between *synapheia,* 'conjunction,' and *synodos*, 'combination', cannot and should not be taken in isolation from the rest of the *Commentary*. What needs to be examined more closely is Theodore's own use of the term, the kind of συνάφεια the author refers to throughout the *Commentary*.

Of the thirty-six passages that belong to this category, twenty-one deal exclusively with the relationship between the Incarnate Logos and the Father. Theodore went to great lengths to make sure that the identity of substance between the Incarnate Logos and the Father would be kept in focus, using terms and phrases such as: ὢν ὁμοίως τῷ Πατρί, τὸ ἀκριβὲς τῆς ὁμοιότητος ἔχει, τὴν ταυτότητα τῆς φύσεως δηλοῖ, τὴν ἀκρίβειαν τῆς ὁμοιότητος, etc[64]. He also used the lips of Christ to bear witness to his divine nature and essence. Christ proclaimed that "My substance is indistinguishable from the Father's"[65], and again, "I differ in no way from the Father"[66]. Even more relevant is Christ's statement that, "being Son by nature … the whole substance of the Father is in me"[67] indicating that the Incarnation did not impose limitations or involve change in the essence of the Logos. The Divinity retained intact all of itself, both essence and nature. That, however, does not necessitate the

62. Cyril, *C. Nestorius* II Proœm, in RUSSELL, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), p. 142. Russell (p. 233 n. 29) notes that "'conjunction', *synapheia*, Nestorius' favourite term for the union of the human and the divine, was not suspected of heretodoxy until it was attacked by Cyril. We find it used by Basil (*Ep*. 210.5), John Chrysostom (*Hom*. 11.2 *in Jo*.), and Proclus of Constantinople (*Or*. *Laud*. *BMV*, 8 – according to one manuscript tradition). Athanasius uses the closely related term, *synaphe*, in a passage that must have been familiar to Cyril (*C*. *Ar*. 2.70). Even Cyril himself uses *synapheia* before the Nestorian controversy as equivalent to *syndrome*, though he qualifies it with the phrase *kath' henosin*, 'in the sense of union" (*Dial*. *Trin*. 6, 605d). *Synapheia*, however, was used frequently by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and other Antiochenes to emphasize the unconfused aspect of the union of the natures. By 430 Cyril is sensitive only to the discreteness of the natures that the word seems to entail, and chooses to interpret the conjunction as accidental or relative (*schetike*). He turns to the attack below [in] (*C*. *Nestorius* II, 5 and II, 8), and again in his Third Letter to Nestorius (*Ep*. 17.5)". See also Russell's pp. 236-237 n. 9 and 10 for a discussion in Cyril's and Theodoret's understandings of *synapheia* ('conjunction') and *synodos* ('combination').

63. Cyril, *C*. *Nestorius* II, 3-10, in RUSSELL, *Cyril of Alexandria* (n. 24), p. 148.

64. *Fragm*. 82, X.29-30 (DEVREESSE, *Essai* [n. 1], 355.23-24); *Fragm*. 83, X.36 (*ibid*., 356.26-27); *Fragm*. 83, X.36 (*ibid*., 357.3-5); *Fragm*. 83, X.37-38 (*ibid*., 357.10); *Fragm*. 112, XII.44-45 (*ibid*., 378.18^{a}-19^{a}); *Fragm*. 112, XII.44-45 (*ibid*., 378.23^{a}-24^{a}); *Fragm*. 112, XII.44-45 (*ibid*., 378.11); *Fragm*. 112, XII.44-45 (*ibid*., 378.17^{b}-18^{b}); *Fragm*. 124, XIV.9 (*ibid*., 389.17^{a}-18^{a}); *Fragm*. 124, XIV.9 (*ibid*., 389.26^{a}-27^{a}); *Fragm*. 125, XIV.10 (*ibid*., 390.2^{a,b}-3^{a,b}); *Fragm*. 125, XIV.10 (*ibid*., 390.13.); *Fragm*. 133, XVII.11^{b} (*ibid*., 406.12).

65. *Fragm*. 125, XIV.11 (DEVREESSE, *Essai*, 290.16-17).

66. *Fragm*. 125, XIV.11 (*ibid*., 290.19).

67. *Fragm*. 131, XVI.15 (*ibid*., 401.6-7).

presence of a separate, second self for the purposes of the Incarnation. Nor is this just a "division of sayings", where the divine element of Christ proclaims its divinity, isolating itself from its human partner. If this were the case, then Theodore's critics would be justified in condemning him for a division of person within the theandric composite into the *Deus Verbum* and the *homo assumptus*.

Even though this is not an exhaustive study on the corpus of Theodore's extant works, the Greek fragments of the *Commentary on John* seem to give quite a surprising answer to this question. Characteristic of the Greek fragments is the absence of any mention of the *homo assumptus*, a term and a concept that permeates the Syriac version.

The division of the Incarnate entity into two separate and distinct selves seems to be explicitly refuted by Theodore in *Fragm*. 78, X.18, where he stated clearly that:

> To say that the body of the Divine Logos also had a soul does not indicate the divinity of the soul. For … Christ, being one and not two, composed of divinity and humanity, says that he, being human, lays down his soul for it is his and part of him, although he was also God in nature, assuming flesh – which had a soul – and united it to him[68].

It is apparent from this quote that Theodore had Apollinarianism in mind as he tried to preserve both the integrity – not separateness – of the human element and, most importantly, present the Divine Logos as a numerical monad, one *prosopon*, indeed "one and not two".

To preserve the integrity of the human element in the theandric composite, the Incarnation ought to involve not just the flesh as a vehicle for humanity, but a flesh that would *not* be absorbed by the overpowering divinity. The Incarnation, therefore, was not the embodiment of the rational soul of the Divine Logos, as Apollinarius had argued, but the hypostatic union of the Divine and the human.

Another fragment that further supports this argument is *Fragm*. 133, XVII.11[b]. It reads as follows:

> By nature (φυσικῶς) Christ was connected to the Father as Divine Logos and to us as a human; and we, therefore, are united with Christ as parts of his flesh and members, receiving spiritual communion through faith[69].

It is important to note here that in the Syriac Version of the same passage there is a clear distinction between the Divine Logos and the *homo*

68. *Ibid*., 354.9-10:῞Ομως λεκτέον ὅτι τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου καὶ ψυχὴν εἶχεν, οὐ τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν θεότητα σημαινούσης … ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ θεότητος ὢν καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος εἷς καὶ οὐ δύο, ὡς ἰδίαν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ μέρος ἴδιον τιθέναι λέγει τὴν ψυχὴν ὡς ὢν ἄνθρωπος εἰ καὶ θεὸς ἦν τῇ φύσει σάρκα ἀναλαβὼν καὶ ἑνώσας ἑαυτῷ ψυχὴν ἔχουσαν.

69. *Ibid*., 406.7-8. Or "In regards to his essence": Φυσικῶς ὁ Χριστὸς συνῆπται τῷ Πατρὶ ὡς Θεὸς Λόγος καὶ ἡμῖν ὡς ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἡμεῖς οὖν ἑνούμεθα τῷ Χριστῷ ὡς σάρκες αὐτοῦ καὶ μέλη τὴν πνευματικὴν κοινωνίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως δεχόμενοι.

assumptus. It reads:

> By nature, the Divine Logos is connected with the Father. Moreover, by means of the connection with him, the *homo assumptus* is also connected with the Father. In addition to our similarity with the natural connection that we have with Christ in the flesh, as great as it happens to be, we receive spiritual participation with him, and we are his body, each one of us is truly a member[70].

In the Syriac version, the *Deus Verbum* and the *homo assumptus* are kept separate; the former being divine by nature while the latter by means of the union. The *homo assumptus*, is foreign to the Father, except for the union with the *Deus Verbum*. In the Greek fragment, however, there is only one subject: Christ. He is divine by nature, connected to the Father by means of his identification as (ὡς) Divine Logos. At the same time, the same Christ is also human by nature (φυσικῶς), connected to us through this latter element of his nature.

The number of subjects, therefore, is different in the two versions. The Syriac version promotes two centers of attribution, the *Deus Verbum* and the *homo assumptus*, while in the Greek, there is only one, ὁ Χριστός.

The following excerpts from the Greek fragments also support the hypothesis that Theodore did not see the Incarnate Logos as two distinct persons but as one *prosopon*, that of Jesus Christ:

> *Fragm.* 106, XII.23: "Near," he said, "is the time for me to be glorified by all and to be worshipped by the whole of creation as God, even though I became a man in the form of a man, becoming such immutably"[71].
> *Fragm.* 128, XIV.28[b]: As for my human form which is seen, it seems to me that as I ascend in greatness, it will be brought up to the heavens[72].
> *Fragm.* 131, XVI.21-22: When you see me being born into incorruptibility, a new man, you will likewise rejoice all the more[73].
> *Fragm.* 132, XVI.27[b]-28: The phrase "I came from besides the Father" means that the Logos was incarnated immutably, and "to the Father" means that he would go up to the Father along with his own flesh[74].
> *Fragm.* 132, XVII.4-5: Therefore, you, too, show everyone who I am, so that they may not concentrate on the passion of my flesh, considering nothing else important about me. Show me to them, then, making known to them

70. Vosté's translation of the Syriac is as follows: "Naturaliter igitur coniunctus est Deus-Verbum Patri. Per coniunctionem autem cum eo accipit et homo assumptus coniunctionem cum Patre. Atque nos similiter cum naturali coniunctione quam habemus cum Christo in carne, quantam fieri potest, recipimus etiam participationem spiritualem cum eo, et ei sumus corpus, unusquisque nostrum vero membrum" (Vosté [n. 16], 225.36–226.5).

71. Devreesse, *Essai*, 372.27-28:Ἐγγύς, φησιν, ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ γενέσθαι με παρὰ πᾶσιν ἐπίδοξον καὶ προσκυνεῖσθαι παρὰ πάσης τῆς κτίσεως ὡς Θεόν, εἰ καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώπου σχήματι γέγονα ἄνθρωπος ἀτρέπτως γεγονώς.

72. *Ibid*., 394.27-29.

73. *Ibid*., 401.24.

74. *Ibid*., 403.12-14.

my divine nature which was before the world came to be, the invisible [nature] through which my glory is also made manifest[75].
Fragm. 133, XVII.9-11[a]: I am transferred with my body from this world[76].
Fragm. 133, XVII.13: I transfer out of this world bodily, yet, I want them not to be disheartened but to rejoice learning that I am God and as God I proceed to the Father[77].

In these fragments there were not two centers of attribution, nor were there two πρόσωπα. Quite the opposite, for the Bishop of Mopsuestia the Incarnation was a process through which the Divine Logos σεσάρκωται ἀτρέπτως, was incarnated immutably. The emphasis in these excerpts lies on identifying the ownership of this flesh, the σεσάρκωται, to be completely and uniquely attributed to the Logos of God. Contrary to Apollinarianism, then, the human element was not an independent, separate, entity inhabited by the divine, but the two were an indistinguishable unit with one center of attribution and existence.

In contrast, then, to the Syriac version, where "one could quote numerous … instances where the *homo assumptus* seems to be conceived as the real subject of human operation: the divinity is present to him, assisting him, etc., but it is the man who really acts and suffers"[78], the Greek fragments show an Incarnation where there are no such distinctions, either implied or possible.

Lastly, it seems that *Fragm.* 132, XVII.4-5 above anticipated the argument articulated by Sullivan: that Theodore did not understand that the *prosopon* in which the two natures are united "is actually the Divine Person of the Word"[79]. In *Fragm.* 132, the Incarnate Christ identifies himself with the eternal Word of God and requests that his divine nature and glory be made manifest; that is, the nature and glory he had "before the world came to be".

John McKenzie very pointedly noted that "one of the first corollaries of Nestorianism was a division between the honor paid to the assumed human nature, which could not possibly be adoration, and the honor which is paid to the divinity. This is one instance in which Theodore's Christology is not only orthodox, but precisely as opposed to the theory of Nestorianism"[80].

III. On the Question of Communicatio Idiomatum

Central in the Alexandrian objections to Nestorianism is a deep fear that a division of the theandric person of Jesus Christ into *Two Sons*

75. *Ibid*., 404.21-24.
76. *Ibid*., 406.4-5.
77. *Ibid*., 406.21-22.
78. Sullivan, *Christology* (n. 8), pp. 219-220.
79. *Ibid*., p. 284.
80. McKenzie, *Annotations* (n. 34), p. 364.

would, by necessity, preclude a *communicatio idiomatum*, as each of the two πρόσωπα would retain its own nature and would, therefore, be affected only by the proper qualities predicated to its own self.

The opening lines of the XII[th] anathema bring the kernel of this discussion very much into focus:

> If anyone defends the impious Theodore of Mopsuestia, who said that one is the God Logos and another is the Christ, who was harassed by anxieties of the soul and the desires of the flesh, and was gradually liberated from the baser passions, and in this way was elevated because of progress in his deeds and became blameless in his life …[81].

The question is one of suffering: Who is the one who suffered, died, and was resurrected? To what extent was the Divine an active participant, a predicate, in the suffering?

Cyril would insist "I know that the nature of God is *impassible*, *immutable*, and *incorruptible*, even though by the nature of his humanity Christ is one in both natures and from both natures"[82]. His argument echoed Athanasius' own understanding of passibility when he argued, "the Logos himself is impassible by nature"[83].

The Alexandrians would argue for a *communicatio idiomatum in abstracto*. This is a relation of the two natures within the person of Christ, where the exchange of properties is not reciprocal: the divine communicates its properties to the human nature, remaining unaffected by the sufferings. It is what has been called "a communication in the downward direction"[84]. Yet, because the *prosopon* is one, both the divine and the human properties are said to be predicated of the same Jesus Christ. That is why, it could be argued, it was so necessary for Theodore to be seen as teaching two distinct Sons, two distinguishable persons. For, in this way, the one who suffered would be different from the one who performed the miracles, as the XII[th] anathema asserts. Francis Sullivan further clarified the consequences of such a Christology:

> This manner of distinguishing as between two subjects of attribution leads naturally to the distinction between "him who suffers" and "him who is present to the one who suffers"; it is one who suffers, it is another who raises him up, etc. [Thus,] the *homo assumptus* seems to be conceived as the real subject of the human operations: the divinity is present to him, assisting him, etc., but it is the man who really acts or suffers[85].

81. Anastos, *Immutability* (n. 36), p. 127.

82. Cyril, *Epist.* 53, *Ad Sanctum Xystum Papam*, in *PG* 77, 285C-288A.

83. Athanasius, *Contra Arianos*, III.34. In R.A. Norris, *The Christological Controversy*, in W.G. Rush (ed.), *Sources of Early Christian Thought*, Philadelphia, PA, Fortress, 1980.

84. McKenzie, *Annotations* (n. 34), p. 366.

85. Sullivan, *Christology* (n. 8), pp. 219-220.

The Greek fragments of the *Commentary on John*, though, do not support such a conclusion. On the contrary, as we have already seen, in Theodore's Christology the suffering of the humanity is assumed by the divinity[86].

Throughout the Greek fragments there are thirty-one passages in which the Divine Logos is seen as the one who suffered, died, and was resurrected by his own power.

In *Fragm.* 13, I.29, Theodore explained that "our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ … destroyed Death through his own death"[87]. Again in *Fragm.* 16, I.46-50 he clearly stated that it was not the *homo assumptus*, the human element that was the subject, but "Jesus clearly manifested the wealth of his own power … [for] he was Son of God … [though] he was seen as a man"[88].

As the *Commentary* progresses closer to the events of the Cross, the author found all the more the opportunity to interject his understanding of divine suffering. He emphasized the unique character of Jesus' suffering and death in that it was voluntary and under his absolute control: "I am choosing to endanger myself on behalf of the sheep and receive death for the salvation of all"[89]. Again, in *Fragm.* 77, X.17: "He shows that not even death is for him as for every person, in so far as he would die whenever he wanted, except that, not long afterwards, he would live again"[90]; and in *Fragm.* 78, X.18: "'Nor,' he said, 'do I suffer the Passion like the rest of the people, being surrounded by the limits of time. For no one is able to take my life from me, but when I want to, then I will give it up'"[91].

As if wanting to answer the question of the predication of suffering before it even arose, Theodore made it clear that it was the divinity that suffered. In *Fragm.* 78, X.18 he explained that "Christ, being one and not two, composed of divinity and humanity, says that he, being human, lays down his soul for it is his own and part of him, although he was also God in nature"[92]. The same idea is also expressed in *Fragm.* 109, XII.31, where he declared that "as God, Christ gave himself up, being able to do anything"[93].

Death, however, was not the only *idiomatum* of humanity in which the divinity participated. In the commentary on the story of Lazarus, the Logos exhibited human feelings: "Christ was angered beforehand, as

86. McKenzie, *Annotations* (n. 34), pp. 357-358.
87. Devreesse, *Essai*, 316.14-16.
88. *Ibid*., 318.8-19.
89. *Fragm.* 75, X.11 (*ibid*., 351.21-22).
90. *Ibid*., 353.1-3.
91. *Ibid*., 353.11-13.
92. *Ibid*., 354.9-11: ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ θεότητος ὢν καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος εἷς καὶ οὐ δύο, ὡς ἰδίαν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ μέρος ἴδιον τιθέναι λέγει τὴν ψυχὴν ὡς ὢν ἄνθρωπος, εἰ καὶ Θεὸς ἦν τῇ φύσει …
93. *Ibid*., 375.23-24.

God"[94], seeing the lack of faith in the hearts of those who surrounded him. And later on, as the Passion drew near, Christ confessed to his disciples that "I am disturbed in my soul in anticipation of the Passion, but I do not request from the Father to be saved; for it is unfitting"[95].

Both the humanity and the divinity in Jesus Christ share the pain, the anguish, and the anticipation of the Passion. Both share the death, but also the resurrection and the glory derived from that. "'Let not my death dismay you', says Christ, 'for … when I will suffer and die, I will rise with great glory and then I will bear much fruit; then all will understand that I am God'"[96]. Theodore's commentary on John 17, Jesus' High-Priestly Prayer, is filled with mentions of Jesus' *homoousian* relationship to the Father[97], culminating in this petition from the lips of Jesus:

> Glorify me, Father, in the time of the Passion, as is fitting to my superiority. Show that I am your Son by nature, even being on the cross, for which you will glorify me, so that all may know that I do not suffer this deservedly, nor in vain, but so that I may become the cause of the greatest good for all people[98].

In Theodore's eyes, he who was on the cross, he who suffered and died, was not the *homo assumptus,* but the Son of God.

There is no difference, therefore, between "him who suffers" and "him who is present to the one who suffers" as Sullivan proposed above. Most importantly, there is no difference between him who died and the one who raised him up. Theodore emphasized this when he described the raising of Lazarus: "For it is not fitting for the God Logos, the creator of all, to receive power to raise the dead one [(*i.e.* Lazarus)] through prayer, he, who in fact, when it came to raise his own body, was not afraid of anything"[99].

These fragments reveal that in this model of *communicatio idiomatum* it is not only divinity that partakes of the *idiomata* of humanity, but the reverse is also true: "the body … was changed to incorruptibility"[100], sharing the glory which the Divine Logos enjoyed[101]. As the Bishop of Mopsuestia explained: "It was truly he … who had been crucified and died and rose; this was the body that was seen, not another one"[102].

94. *Fragm.* 97, XI.33-34 (*ibid*., 365.2^{b}-3^{b}).
95. *Fragm.* 108, XII.27 (*ibid*., 374.9-10).
96. *Fragm.* 106, XII.24 (*ibid*., 373.4-9).
97. *Fragm.* 132, XVI.26-27^{a} (*ibid*., 402.6^{a}-7^{a}): Οἱ γνόντες ὅτι ὁ Υἱὸς ὁμοούσιός ἐστι τῷ Πατρί.
98. *Fragm.* 132, XVII.1 (*ibid*., 403.30-34):'Αξίως με δόξασον, ὦ Πάτερ, ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τοῦ πάθους, τῆς ἐμῆς ὑπεροχῆς. Δεῖξον ὅτι υἱός σου εἰμι φύσει καὶ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ ὤν, δι' ὅν με δοξάζεις, ἵνα πάντες τοῦτο γνῶσιν ὅτι οὐχ ὡς ἄξιος τοῦτο πάσχω οὔτε ἄκων, ἀλλ' ἵνα πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις αἴτιος γένωμαι ἀγαθῶν μεγίστων.
99. *Fragm.* 99, XI.41-42 (*ibid*., 367.2-4).
100. *Fragm.* 136, XX.1-10 (*ibid*., 414.28-29).
101. *Fragm.* 130, XVI.7. Also *Fragm.* 110, XII.35, etc.
102. *Fragm.* 138, XX.19-20 (*ibid*., 417.3-4).

Theodore indeed expressed a *communicatio idiomatum* in his Christology. His understanding of communication of properties, though, was quite different from that of the Alexandrians. His was not a *communicatio idiomatum in abstracto* but a *communicatio idiomatum in concreto*, and especially of what would later be called a *genus maiestaticum*, where the human nature is involved in a hypostatic relationship with the divine nature, each participating fully in the ἰδιώματα of the other. It is not a *communicatio idiomatum* based on the Divine ἀπάθεια, but in the sense that the Divine Logos shared in the passion and the suffering of humanity through his human element. Humanity, then, also participated in the acts of the Logos and the body was, ultimately, transformed to incorruptibility. This is not, therefore, an Incarnation of "inhabitation" but of truly "becoming".

IV. On the Question of Immutabilitas

Thus far I have argued that the first two of the accusations brought against Theodore's Christology cannot be supported by the Greek fragments of the *Commentary on John*. Furthermore, this analysis has shown that the Bishop of Mopsuestia tried very hard to present a Christology that was in accord with Nicene-Constantinopolitan Orthodoxy and refuted the heresies of Arianism and Apollinarianism. The last of the three accusations against Theodore that remains to be examined is the question of Jesus' mutability.

Essential in Cyril's interpretation of Theodore's understanding of Jesus' mutability were extracts from his *Catechetical Homilies* in which he explained that: "[God] raised Christ our Lord from the dead, and made Him immortal and immutable, and took Him up to heaven"[103]. And again: "[Jesus Christ] was also baptized so that He might perform the Economy of the Gospel according to order, and in this (Economy) He died and abolished death. It was easy and not difficult for God to have made Him at once *immortal*, *incorruptible* and *immutable* as He became after His resurrection"[104].

For Cyril there was no question that Theodore did not share his own understanding of divine immutability but had degraded Jesus Christ to the status of a mere man, a ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον.

In his letter on the Symbol (*In Sanctum Symbolum*, *Epist*. 55) the summation of his commentary on the Creed, Cyril very pointedly wrote that the Divine Logos was God who took up

103. A. Mingana, *The Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* (Woodbrooke Studies, 6), Cambridge, W. Heffer & Sons Limited, 1933, p. 29. Emphasis is mine.

104. Id., *The Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed* (Woodbrooke Studies, 5), Cambridge, W. Heffer & Sons Limited, 1931, p. 9. Emphasis is mine.

> flesh animated with a rational soul. … The flesh was not that of someone else, but rather his own ineffably and unspeakably united with him. … And he became flesh not because he turned into a nature of the flesh according to a transition, or a change, or an alteration, nor because he underwent a confusion, or a blending, or the fusion of essences being babbled about by some [*i.e.,* Apollinarians], for that is impossible since he is by nature unchangeable and is unalterable, as I said, but because he took flesh animated with a rational soul from a virginal and undefiled body and made it his own. … However those who divide him into two sons [*i.e.,* Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius] and dare to say that God the Word joined to himself the man of the seed of David and shared with him the glory, the honor, and the excellence of the filiation and prepared him to endure the cross, to die, to rise again, to ascend into heaven, and to sit at the right hand of the Father, in order that he might be adored by all creation and receive the honors by a relationship to God, in the first place preach two sons; and in the second place ignorantly distort the meaning of mystery[105].

Jesus Christ, therefore, the Incarnate Son of God, was not only ὁμοούσιος with the Father, he was also τροπὴς ἀμείνων, superior to change[106].

It was the same criticism that was echoed by Milton Anastos when he argued that: "Actually … many of the major errors of Theodore's Christology arise from the Doctrine of the Person of Christ presupposed by the theory that Christ did not attain ἀτρεπτότητα until after the resurrection"[107]. It was, again, on the *Catechetical Homilies* that this criticism would be based, specifically in quotes such as the following:

> [Jesus Christ] was also baptized so that He might perform the Economy of the Gospel according to order, and in this (Economy) He died and abolished death. It was easy and not difficult for God to have made Him at once *immortal*, *incorruptible* and *immutable* as He became after His resurrection …[108].

What neither the ancient nor the modern critics of Theodore took into account, however, was the identity of the subject of this post-resurrection transformation to immortality, incorruptibility, and immutability.

Throughout the Greek fragments we have seen that the subject of this transformation is the body of Christ. *Fragm.* 136, XX.1-10 is characteristic of this interpretation. Here, the subject is "the body that was changed to incorruptibility"[109].

Even in *Fragm.* 131, XVI.21-22, where Jesus explains to his disciples that "when you see me being born into incorruptibility, a new man, you

105. Cyril, *In Sanctum Symbolum*, *Epist*. 55.21-24.
106. Cyril, *Apologeticus Contra Theodoretum Pro XII Capitibus*, in *PG* 76, 396B.
107. Anastos, *Immutability* (n. 36), p. 128.
108. Mingana, *On the Nicene Creed* (n. 104), p. 69. Emphasis is mine.
109. Devreesse, *Essai*, 414.28-29.

will rejoice all the more"[110], the subject is not Jesus, but his body, as the author explained earlier, in *Fragm.* 128, XIV.28[b], in these words:

> And as for my human form that is seen (*i.e.* my body), it seems to me that as I ascend in greatness, it will be brought up to the heavens, and you ought to rejoice for the magnitude of this phenomenon[111].

Very telling is Theodore's description of the encounter between the resurrected Christ and Mary outside his tomb:

> The Lord was saying these things wanting to hold her back from touching him. With the other [statements], however, he wants to teach us that, being raised, he would not remain on the Earth but would go up to heaven, to be – along with his body – by his own Father, and also [to teach] that [his] body was not what it used to be, but shared in some much greater glory. Therefore, one ought not to touch it in the same way as one was touching it before the resurrection[112].

In addition to fragments that would lead us to infer that the subject of the transformation was the body of Christ, there are two passages that specifically address this question:

> *Fragm.* 106, XII.23: "Near", he said, "is the time for me to be glorified by all and to be worshiped by the whole of creation as God, even though I became a man in the form of a man, becoming such immutably"[113].
> *Fragm.* 132, XVI.27[b]-28[b]: The phrase "I came from besides the Father" means that the Logos was incarnated immutably, and "to the Father" means that he would go up to the Father along with his own flesh, after he has managed everything properly on the Earth, so that he might make ready what is in heaven for us[114].

In both these fragments Theodore is quite specific and clear in providing for an *immutable* Incarnation. The Divine Logos, he insists, σεσάρκωται ἀτρέπτως.

As in the case of *homoousios*, adherence to Nicene definitions of Orthodoxy is paramount for Theodore. Therefore, here, too, he will make his argument using the language of Nicaea: "But … those who say that the Son of God is 'from another hypostasis or essence', or 'mutable' or alterable' – them the catholic and apostolic church anathematizes"[115].

110. *Ibid.*, 401.24.
111. *Ibid.*, 394.27-29.
112. *Ibid.*, 415.23[b]-416.8[b].
113. *Ibid.*, 372.27-28: Ἐγγύς, φησιν, ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ γενέσθαι με παρὰ πᾶσιν ἐπίδοξον καὶ προσκυνεῖσθαι παρὰ πάσης τῆς κτίσεως ὡς Θεόν, εἰ καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώπου σχήματι γέγονα ἄνθρωπος ἀτρέπτως γεγονώς.
114. *Ibid.*, 403.13: Τὸ ἐξῆλθον παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς δηλοῖ ὅτι σεσάρκωται ὁ Λόγος ἀτρέπτως, καὶ τὸ ἀνελθεῖν πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα, ὅτι σὺν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ σαρκὶ ἄνεισι πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα μετὰ τὸ οἰκονομῆσαι καλῶς πάντα τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς, ὥστε καὶ τὰ εἰς οὐρανοὺς εὐτρεπίσαι ἡμῖν.
115. Norris, *The Christological Controversy* (n. 83), p. 157.

The process of transformation into a state of immutability and incorruptibility, then, was not attributed to the person of Jesus Christ, either before or after the resurrection, but was specifically addressing the transformation of the body, the flesh of Jesus, from its natural, temporal, and mutable status to a glorified, eternal, and immutable one. A transformation that was necessitated by the requirements of the Ascension to the heavens.

CONCLUSION

In this study we have seen that the Greek fragments of the *Commentary on John* do not support the three primary accusations brought against Theodore of Mopsuestia, first by Cyril of Alexandria and then by Justinian, during the Fifth Ecumenical Council of 553.

The Christology presented within these fragments is one in which the theandric composite exhibits a clear unity of *prosopon*, not the Nestorian "Two-Sons". More specifically, the Christology presented therein is truly, as John of Antioch explained, in reaction to Arianism and Apollinarianism[116]. As a result, Theodore placed much less emphasis on expressing a fully developed Christological system than he did on presenting the *homoousian* relationship between Father and Son, and the *hypostatic* union of the Incarnate Logos.

On the issue of *communicatio idiomatum*, although Theodore would not agree with the Athanasian *in abstracto* model, his Christology contains a fully developed model *in concreto* that allowed a complete and reciprocal relationship between the divine and the human elements, the former participating in the sufferings, the latter partaking of the glory.

The third accusation against the Mopsuestian was that he taught that Jesus Christ attained immutability, immortality and incorruptibility only after the resurrection. This, too cannot be supported by the Greek version of the *Commentary on John*. On the contrary, the Greek version presents a very clear position of immutability for Jesus Christ. In addition, it focuses the issue of post-resurrection transformation into incorruptibility on the flesh, the body of Christ, for purposes pertaining to the Ascension and the participation of the body of the Incarnation in the glorified state of the Divine Logos.

Garrett-Evang. Theol. Seminary
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60201
U.S.A.

George KALANTZIS

116. John of Antioch, *Epist*. 66 (to Cyril), in *PG* 77, 332C-D.